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A-G Ben-Yair resigns, denies being forced out

EVELYN GORDON
ATTORNEY-GENERAL Michael Ben-Yair unexpectedly announced his resignation yesterday, shocking the political world. The resignation is to take effect January 1, though Ben-Yair said he would be willing to stay a little longer if this were necessary to ensure a smooth transition to his successor. In a brief press statement, Ben-Yair attributed his resignation to burnout. "These have been three very, very intensive years, with a huge amount of activity, both during the period of the previous government

and during the tenure of the present government," he told reporters prior to a lecture in Netanya last night. "After three years like that, it's only natural that there should be a need to be alone with oneself." However, people who know Ben-Yair said the problem was less the sheer volume of work since he took office in November 1993 than his inability to work with the Netanyahu government. From the government's inception, there were rumors that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu wanted to oust him, and relations between the two have been strained ever since Ben-Yair

decided to open a criminal investigation of then justice minister Ya'acov Ne'eman, who was Netanyahu's hand-picked choice. One result of the lack of trust between the premier and his attorney-general was that Ben-Yair felt shut out of the government's decision-making process, sources said. He was not consulted on a variety of important issues — as he used to be under the Labor government — and thus felt his ability to have an impact was minimal. This is also a convenient time for him to leave, the sources said, since there are no high-profile cases on his plate right now. Had he announced his resignation ear-



Attorney-General Ben-Yair

lier — before the decision to indict Ne'eman, for instance — it might have looked too much like retreating under fire. However, Ben-Yair vigorously denied that he was forced out. "There was no compulsion," he said. "The decision was entirely mine, with no pressure and no compulsion whatsoever." The coalition denied that Ben-Yair had left because he was kept out of the loop, saying the new government had treated him with all due respect, and that his motives were purely personal. But while most paid standard lip service to his performance, few people in the coalition were sorry to

see him go. "He performed an important service, not just for one government, but for [two] governments of Israel," said Netanyahu. However, Netanyahu said, he respected Ben-Yair's decision to leave. "He behaved, I think, according to an appropriate public norm: that of a man who gives his years of service and then moves on," Netanyahu said. "Believe me, I mean to do the same thing, though perhaps not after only one term. I think this is a praiseworthy norm, whereby people can come from the private [business] sector or the legal world, and then return

to private life or to other occupations." Coalition chairman Michael Eitan (Likud) said he hopes the new attorney-general would be someone closer to the Likud's political outlook. "The context of [Ben-Yair's] appointment was political," Eitan said. "[Labor] examined what was good for them and who was good for them, and in the nature of things, [Ben-Yair] wasn't ever someone the Likud would have chosen. But I think he acted more or less objectively — as much as someone appointed by a government can be objective." Knesset Law Committee chair- (Continued on Page 9)



Emergency forces take position outside the Paris subway station where a bomb exploded yesterday, killing two people, and injuring 80. No one has claimed responsibility for the explosion. (AP)

Two killed, 80 wounded in Paris subway bombing

PARIS — A powerful bomb shredded a subway car at a station in the heart of Paris during the evening rush hour yesterday, killing at least two people and wounding over 80 others, 35 critically. Prime Minister Alain Juppe told reporters at the scene that a bomb caused the explosion, and French television said it was fashioned from a 13-kilo gas canister — the signature bomb used in the 1995 bombings that killed eight people and injured 160. The explosion occurred only hours after a declaration was signed at the organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe summit in Lisbon, stating that "As we approach the new century, it is more important than ever that we build together a peaceful region, where all our nations and individuals feel secure." Juppe said the bombing — on the edge of the city's famed Latin Quarter — prompted officials to reinstate an emergency vigilance plan activated after the 1995 subway bombings. It was chillingly close to the site of the worst of last year's bombings, at the St. Michel station. That bombing killed eight people and wounded 84 others. Algerian Islamic extremists claimed responsibility for most of last year's bombings, which also used gas canisters, packed with nails, nuts and bolts. Officials said the bomb exploded on the second car of a long subway commuter train head-

ing toward the southern Paris suburb of St. Remy les Chevreuses. The subway car was a burned-out hulk of wreckage after the explosion, its doors blown off by the force of the blast, and a second car was damaged. Passengers in other cars said they felt the force of the blast. Officials said the explosion occurred at 6:05 p.m., at the Port-Royal station, on the RER regional line shutting thousands of commuters in and out of the French capital. The bomb exploded just as the train was pulling into the station. French radio said the two people who died were killed instantly, and predicted the death toll might rise because three of the wounded were so badly hurt. Witnesses said the scene was one of panic, of thick black smoke, the chilling wail of ambulances, and paramedics frantically carrying away thrashing wounded on stretchers. "I saw lots and lots of smoke and I heard a big boom," said a man who gave his name only as Jean-Francois. "People were crying and in a state of shock." The first ambulances were on the scene within two minutes, a witness said. The wounded were rushed to a nearby military hospital specializing in trauma victims. Smoke could be smelled from blocks away

from the subway station. Dozens of ambulances, fire trucks, and at least 30 buses carrying silver-helmeted riot police surrounded the station. An anti-terrorist investigative squad was on the scene. A man living above the station in an apartment with soundproof windows told French radio he heard "a deafening noise." "I saw the subway car and it was totally blown apart," he said. Interior Minister Jean-Louis Debre said France was tightening its borders as a precaution, and train stations and airports across France were on alert and increasing security. President Jacques Chirac condemned what he called "these unacceptable acts, these barbaric acts that always attack innocent people." "The government and I are determined to fight against terrorism in all its forms. Nothing will be neglected," Chirac said in a press conference outside the presidential Elysee Palace. Chirac had been meeting with German Chancellor Helmut Kohl at the time of the blast, and the pair abruptly canceled a joint appearance. A witness told France Info radio she heard a large boom and could smell something like gun smoke. "There was a sort of detonation and a strong odor like on a firing range," she said. A few minutes later, the wail of ambulances filled the area. There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the rush-hour bombing.

Netanyahu, Moussa express hope for improved relations

LISBON (AP) — Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu held talks with Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Moussa yesterday. Both he and Moussa said they hoped relations between Israel and Egypt could be improved. "That was a serious and very frank talk about the [peace] process," Moussa told journalists after the talks, held on the fringes of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) summit in Lisbon. "We listened to what Mr. Netanyahu had to say. It was a very useful and businesslike meeting," he said about the discussions that lasted for over an hour. "They went very well," echoed Netanyahu. "We discussed all aspects of the peace process in the Middle East," he said. "Of course we have a number of differences and points of view, but I think there was a real desire to understand one another," Netanyahu said. Moussa said that he had delivered a letter to Netanyahu from Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak

and had received a written reply in return. "We hope we can overcome the obstacles in a fair way... to reach a balanced agreement that would satisfy both sides," Moussa said. Netanyahu said in a speech at the summit that "Israel will not be dissuaded from its main strategic aim — to reach a comprehensive peace with all its neighbors." In his speech to the OSCE summit, which he attended as an observer, Netanyahu said "terrorism in the heart of our major cities and along our northern border... emanated from areas under control of our negotiating partners." "And while at the negotiating table we have been speaking about the need for confidence building, on the ground we have witnessed military movements that have precisely the opposite effect." Netanyahu did not further describe the military movements. The prime minister also defended his government's (Continued on Page 9)



Jerusalem Deputy Mayor Shmuel Meir, an outspoken city leader for the past decade, was killed yesterday afternoon when an oncoming truck swerved into his van on the Hizme-Adam road, just east of the city. Meir was pronounced dead at the scene. His companion in the van, Ateret Cohanim settlement group head Matti Dan, was moderately injured. Story, Page 2 (Brian Henner)

Knesset debates... donut deliveries?
LIAT COLLINS
IT was the donut debate of the decade. The issue of who will distribute those round, jelly-filled balls of calories to soldiers dominated the Knesset's plenum agenda yesterday, and was eventually referred to the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee for further deliberations. Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai answered several motions to the agenda on the subject, which revolved around the question of whether Habad activists are allowed into IDF camps to give out donuts. Meretz MK Ran Cohen was the most vocal opponent of the policy, while the Likud's Silvan Shalom accused the left of baseless hatred. In his answer, Mordechai announced that in the coming days he will (Continued on Page 9)

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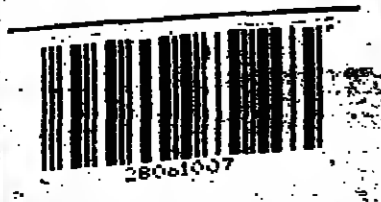
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One elderly resident was slightly hurt yesterday when she tried to cross this ditch dug by the Israel Electric Corporation in Jerusalem's Rehavia neighborhood. An IEC spokesman said the ditch, which made entering the building virtually impossible, was necessary to install electric cables. (Brian Hender)

Eighth graders - just over average

Begin: International science, math test scores nothing to be ashamed of

CONSIDERING the aura of Jewish prominence in the sciences and mathematics, Israeli eighth graders deserve a "could do better" grade for their middling scores in an international achievement study.

In the Third International Mathematics and Science Study just released, Israeli eighth graders were just a bit above the world average of 513 points in math and the world average of 516 points in science. Singapore topped both charts, with a phenomenal 643 and 607 points respectively.

Israeli pupils averaged 522 points in math, behind countries such as Austria, Bulgaria, Slovenia, Ireland, Switzerland, the Slovak Republic, Japan, South Korea and the Netherlands.

In science, they earned 524 points, behind Thailand, New Zealand, Germany, the US, Sweden, and various Central

JUDY SIEGEL

European and Asian countries.

Science Minister Ze'ev Binyamin Begin told *The Jerusalem Post* that while there was room for improvement, the result was nothing to be ashamed of. Israeli researchers continue to rank No. 1 in the number of citations in scientific journals per capita, he said, and "in many fields, we are among the best in the world."

In the Haifa Technion this year, a third of the students are women, Begin said, but more must be done to provide youngsters with role models in the sciences, so that fewer talented brains don't go into law, for example.

Begin quoted a Russian-born teacher he met at Tel Aviv's Mofet School, attended mostly by talented immigrant

pupils from the CIS, who said: "The trick for producing excellence is tradition, commitment and values." Although his ministry does not educate young people, it is getting involved in a project to promote special science activities for children in poorer neighborhoods and development towns, he said.

The Education and Culture Ministry spokesman, commenting on the scores, said the study "shows that Israel, like other strong countries such as Germany, the US, England and Spain, have more to do in this field."

The ministry intends to invest much effort and resources in the advancement of science and technological education - some NIS 300 million a year, he said. A new set of courses, science and technology, was introduced into the curriculum recently, he added.

Blumenthal sets off Knesset storm over immigrants

COALITION whip Michael Eitan will meet with MK Naomi Blumenthal (Likud) to examine the functioning of the Knesset's Aliya Committee which she heads, following a storm in the committee yesterday.

Nine MKs from Yisrael B'Aliya, Labor, Meretz and Shas walked out of a meeting convened yesterday by Blumenthal to discuss the alleged proliferation of spies among the new immigrants.

They were followed by former

GSS deputy head, MK Gideon Ezra (Likud), who was due to appear before the committee as an expert. Only MK Moris Zandberg remained in the committee room with Blumenthal.

The protesting MKs said later they were incensed by the stigma that was being cast upon the immigrants. "This is a marginal and superficial subject," said Yisrael B'Aliya faction leader Roman Bronfman. "We would like to discuss matters of importance, such

BATSHEVA TSUR

as housing and employment."

The Yisrael B'Aliya MKs, who appealed to Eitan to examine the situation in the committee, charged that Blumenthal was looking for "sensations" at the expense of the immigrants. They said that two other meetings had been held on subjects which attracted the media, but did not touch on the immigrants' real

problems - one concerning the Russian mafia, and another on foreign workers which dealt with "Russian-speaking prostitutes."

A spokesman for the faction said attempts to persuade Blumenthal to cancel the meeting had failed, even though the head of the Mossad and the Russian ambassador had turned down invitations to appear before the committee.

Blumenthal reacted by saying: "I don't believe in shutting peoples' mouths... If the Yisrael B'Aliya

members had remained in the committee, they would surely have been delighted to hear reports that only a very small minority - a handful - of persons with intentions of spying have arrived here from the former CIS, and that they immediately cut off contacts with their operators on arrival here. Therefore I genuinely believe the debate was necessary and I plan to continue to do everything possible to eradicate the unfair stigma that has been attached to the immigrants."

Court holds rapist, despite accuser's denial of attack

EVELYN GORDON

THE Supreme Court decided yesterday not to free a convicted rapist whose accuser has since been videotaped saying the rape never happened, on the grounds that there are too many questions about the new evidence to justify the man's release at this stage.

David Guetta, 39, was convicted by the Tel Aviv District Court 10 months ago of raping a relative, who was a minor at the time. He was sentenced to three-and-a-half years in prison. His wife then hired a private investigator to prove her husband's innocence, and the investigator got the girl on videotape saying she had lied in court about the rape. Guetta then requested a retrial.

However, the state insisted that the girl's testimony in court was accurate, while her videotaped statement to the private investigator, David Schneider, was a lie.

Justices Aharon Barak, Mishael Cheshin and Dalia Dorner ruled yesterday that there was no need for a full retrial. Instead, they said, the district court should hold hearings on the validity of the videotaped confession and send its conclusions to the Supreme Court, which will take these findings into

account when hearing Guetta's appeal. This process could easily take months, however, so Guetta asked to be released in the meantime.

Because of the questions surrounding the tape, however, the justices said Guetta's release at this stage would be premature.

Both the state and the girl claim that Schneider entrapped her into lying by making her fall in love with him, and then pretending that he wanted to stage a robbery against himself to collect insurance money on his property. He told her he wanted a female accomplice who would be capable of lying to the insurance company. The girl says she was so in love with him that she lied to convince him of her suitability as his accomplice, telling him she had even gotten a man convicted of a rape that never happened by lying to the police.

As proof that the girl was lying to Schneider and telling the truth in court, the prosecution notes that the girl told Schneider she never even had sex with Guetta. Guetta, however, admitted to sleeping with her; he merely said it was with her consent.

Court grants furlough to mentally ill man serving life for murder

RAINE MARCUS

THE Jerusalem District Court yesterday ruled that a mentally ill prisoner serving a life term for murdering his wife be granted a furlough, despite objections by Prisons Service authorities and police.

Yitzhak Kostika was sentenced to life imprisonment in 1989 for the murder of his wife, Sophie. A court ruled that although he was mentally disturbed at the time of the murder, he was responsible for his actions and was able to serve a prison sentence.

Since he was only imprisoned seven years ago, his term has not been fixed by the president. Under normal circumstances, prisoners serving life sentences are only granted furloughs once their sentences are fixed.

Until a few months ago, Kostika was serving his term in the psychiatric ward at Ramle's Ayalon Prison, and police, the Labor and Social Affairs Ministry committee on domestic violence and Prisons

Service authorities recommended he remain there without the possibility of furloughs for now.

After he was released from the prison's psychiatric wing, he was granted a furlough, but his wife's family protested strongly, and demanded he undergo an external examination. The Prisons Service consultation board reconsidered its decision and his furlough was rescinded.

However, yesterday Kostika appealed to the Jerusalem District Court which approved an eight-hour furlough, adding that there was no need for him to be accompanied by a warden or policeman.

In an interview on Army Radio yesterday, Na'amat chairperson and lawyer Ofra Friedman said that the organization would appeal the matter to a higher court.

Kostika's son Rami also said in an interview that if his father was granted a furlough, he and other family members would fear for their lives.

Campaign launched to boost number of organ donors

JUDY SIEGEL

THE number of people who registered as potential organ donors has jumped by more than 50% this year - to 82,000, or 1.7% of the population - but the figure is still way below that in the US (25%), Holland (21%) and Saudi Arabia (15%).

Israel Transplant, the national coordinating center for organ transplants in Petah Tikva, will launch a campaign tomorrow to register with ADL, the voluntary organization that encourages and compiles the list of potential organ donors.

The campaign, which will be held through Hanukka, is called "The Circle of Life." Some 1,600 Rotary volunteers will set up booths around the country to raise the awareness of the need to bequeath organs and to register with ADL. Israel Transplant has also asked government ministers

and the 120 MKs to sign up.

In 1995, 4,550 signed registration cards, attached to drivers' licenses, or available directly from ADL at POB 38, Petah Tikva 49100, or by phone at (03) 937-6950 or 921-0248. So far this year, the number of new registrants is 10,721. The current rate is 893 new signatories a month.

A total of 1,031 Israelis are waiting for a transplant, including 800 in the queue for a kidney, 120 for a heart, 50 for a liver, 30 for a lung and 20 for a pancreas. Most will die prematurely while waiting. The queue has lengthened by the 8.5% during the past year. The number of transplants carried out since January is 127: 68 kidney, five pancreas, 16 heart, 15 lung and 23 liver. They came from only 39 actual donors.

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מכרזים ודוכנים

BUSINESS & FINANCE

Wednesday, December 4, 1996

Property firms eye Hapoalim's Amot stake

GALIT LIPKIS BECK

AN estimated three groups engaged in the real-estate sector have expressed interest in acquiring 25% to 30% of Amot Investments, the real estate company in which Bank Hapoalim currently holds a 14% stake...

between the managers, the funds have not yet decided what to do. The funds have three options, said the source. The first is for Hapoalim to keep its investment in the company unchanged...

Arafat adviser: Rethink Israel-PA economic pact

DAVID HARRIS

CERTAIN clauses of the Paris economic accords between Israel and the Palestinian Authority must be canceled and others redrafted, PA Chairman Yasser Arafat's chief economic adviser, Mohammed Rachid, told The Jerusalem Post this week.

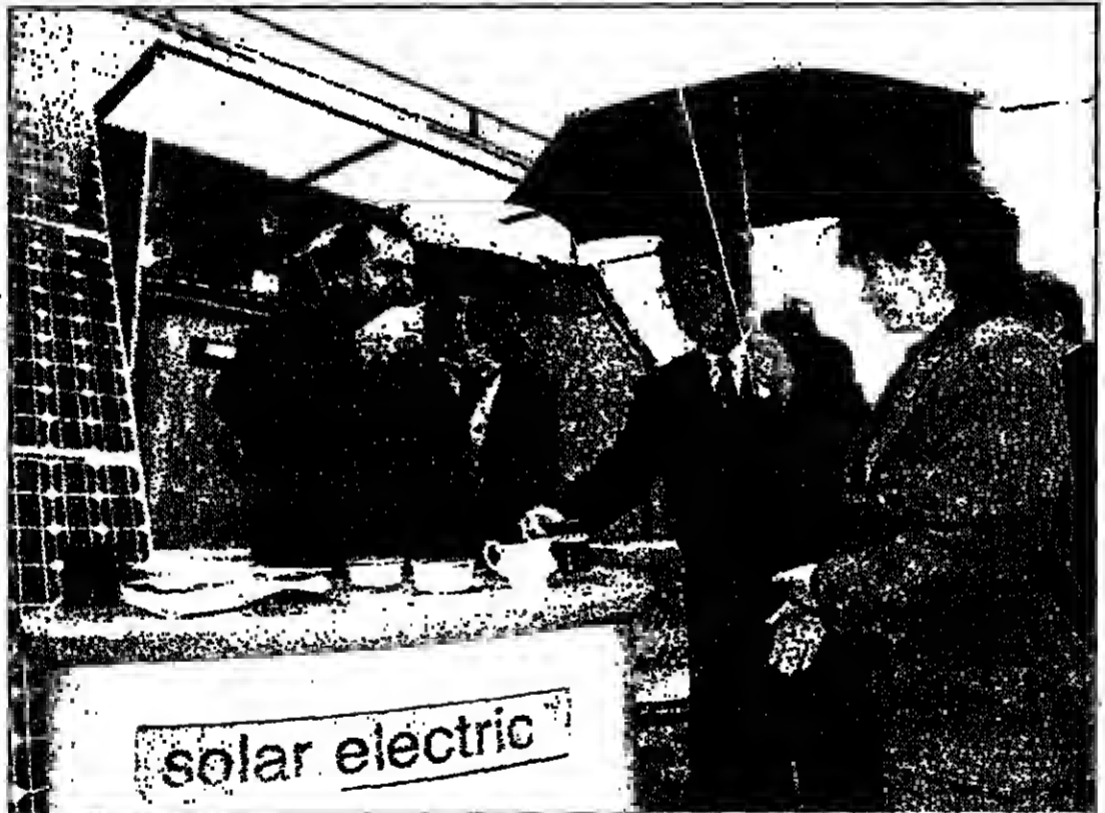
Admitting there were problems surrounding the issue of purchase tax, Zeif added, "this is the main issue on the table. It is neither in our interest, nor that of the Palestinians."

Lehman: Leumi to lead Israeli banks in '97 earnings

GALIT LIPKIS BECK

BANK Leumi is on track to become Israel's most profitable financial institution in 1997, Lehman Brothers concluded in their report on the bank.

to outperform," said the report. Lehman Brothers estimates Bank Leumi will complete 1996 with a net profit of NIS 675 m., based on the assumption that fourth-quarter net earnings will "not be quite so strong" as in the third quarter.



European Union Energy Commissioner Christos Papoutsis (left) Irish Energy Minister Alan Dukes (center), and EU political adviser Aphrodite Monreletou have a cup of coffee prepared using solar energy yesterday.

Warsaw meeting proposes means to fight car crime

WARSAW (Reuters) - An international conference in Warsaw on car theft, itself a sign more countries are now taking the problem seriously, was set, yesterday, to propose remedies including the creation of a global database for police.

Conference host Poland, a transit country for gangs whisking cars stolen in western Europe eastwards to former Soviet states, has itself suffered a boom in vehicle theft. Interpol figures show that in 1995, 50,684 cars were stolen in Poland, a 20.6 percent rise over the previous year...

Menorah Insurance manager Shabtai Angel dies at 60

GALIT LIPKIS BECK

MENORAH Insurance Company general manager Shabtai Angel died last night at the age of 60. Shabtai was considered among the insurance sector's most talented and conservative managers.

Microsoft: European businesses behind US in exploiting Internet

PARIS (Reuters) - Software group Microsoft Corp warned European businesses yesterday that they lagged behind the US in tapping the power of the Internet and this could undermine their competitiveness.

gap points to a big potential market. For Europe to match the PC penetration level of the US, 48 million additional PCs must be sold, Vergnes said. He said he expected PC shipments in Europe to total between 16.5 and 17 million this year and then rise a further 12% in 1997 to about 19 million.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Bezeq and the communications revolution: Multimedia will soon become a major business of Bezeq, said outgoing director-general Yitzhak Kaul, yesterday, as he presented the company's five-year plan. By this he meant broad-band communications that allow the quick transmission of sound, data, video, and graphics.

Meridor: Low internal revenue predictions for '97 are 'relative'

LIAT COLLINS

PREDICTIONS of low internal revenues for 1997 should be seen as "relative," and stem from the government's "temporary but exceptionally high" income in 1993-1994, ultimately used as the basis for the 1995 budget, Finance Minister Dan Meridor told coalition MKs yesterday.

Table with multiple columns: ISRAELI MONEY MARKETS, Patah (foreign currency deposit rates) (11.9.96), Shekel Foreign Exchange Rates* (3.12.96), CHECKS AND TRANSFERS, BANKNOTES. Includes various currencies and their exchange rates.

Advertisement for 'A fax for you' by Israel Discount Bank. Text: 'All you want to know about your accounts, on your fax, within 15 minutes. 15 minutes and you're gone...'

TEI AVIV STOCK MARKET

BUSINESS & FINANCE

Key Representative Rates table showing U.S. Dollar, Sterling, and German mark rates.

NYSE STOCK MARKETS

New York market indexes table including DJ Industrials, DJ Transport, NYSE Industrials, etc.

Other stock market indexes

Table listing various international stock market indexes like FTSE 100, Nikkei, etc.

Israeli stocks in US

Table listing Israeli stocks traded in the US market, including Am Tel, Azura, etc.

TEI AVIV STOCKS

Multi-sided trading table with columns for Name, Price, and Change.

Two-sided trading table with columns for Name, Price, and Change.

Commercial Banks table listing various banks and their stock prices.

Industrial table listing various industrial companies and their stock prices.

Mortgage Banks & Finance table listing mortgage-related financial institutions.

Financial Institutions table listing various financial service providers.

Insurance table listing various insurance companies.

Trade & Services table listing various trade and service companies.

Property, Building & Agriculture table listing companies in these sectors.

Oil Exploration table listing oil and gas exploration companies.

PARALLEL LIST table listing companies listed on other exchanges.

Trade & Services table listing various trade and service companies.

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Oil Exploration table listing oil and gas exploration companies.

Shares soar as shekel weakens

TEI AVIV STOCK MARKET ROBERT DANIEL. Two-Sided Index +2.05%, Maof Index +2.49%.

STOCKS soared as the shekel weakened to its lowest point against the US dollar in six months, improving the outlook for exporters. Investors also speculated that the government might unite with the Labor party...

German shares hit 4th record

LONDON (Reuters) - German shares stormed to their fourth record close in a row yesterday as a buoyant dollar boosted bond markets and French equities within sight of their historic high.

Dow drops on late profit-taking

NEW YORK (Reuters) - Blue-chip stocks tumbled yesterday as late profit-taking overwhelmed an early attempt to extend the rally. The Dow Jones industrial average sank 79.01 points to 6,442.69.

CURRENCY CROSS-RATES

Table showing currency cross-rates for MARK, STERLING, YEN, SFR, and FFf.

BEN-YAIR

(Continued from Page 1) man Shaul Yahalom (National Religious Party) also said Ben-Yair "started his tenure as a political attorney-general by declaring the Council of Jewish Communities in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza to be a seditious body..."

DONUTS

(Continued from Page 1) meet with Habad representatives and IDF chief rabbi to finalize arrangements, but for now, Habad will be able to approach the camps and drop the donuts off for distribution by soldiers inside.

NETANYAHU

(Continued from Page 1) expansion of Jewish settlements in the West Bank, and said the onus was on Palestinian leaders to renegotiate IDF withdrawal from Hebron.

ISRAEL DISCOUNT BANK advertisement with logo and contact information.

INTERNATIONAL STOCK PRICES

Large table listing international stock prices for various companies across different markets.

INTL MONEY MARKETS

Table showing dollar cross-rates for various currencies.

Labor rates

Table listing labor rates for different periods and currencies.

Foreign financial data courtesy of CommStock Trading Ltd.

Text providing contact information for CommStock Trading Ltd.

INTL COMMODITIES AND METALS

Table listing international commodity and metal prices.

Spot market metals (US)

Table listing spot market metal prices in US dollars.

New York metal futures

Table listing New York metal futures prices.

